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RS/R FILES

Attention MRS TROMBLY

Keep this study together.

MAY 14 1973

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CIM/IR
REVIEWED BY [illegible] DATE 4-12-83
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Dr. Claude L. Fly
415 South Howes, Apt. 1107
Fort Collins, Colorado 80521

Dear Dr. Fly:

The Secretary, who is about to depart on a trip through Latin America, has asked me to reply to your letter of April 23, 1973, expressing your understandably keen interest in the film "State of Siege".

First let me say that we were all very glad to hear from you and we sincerely hope that you are well.

The Secretary thanks you for your statement on our comment concerning "State of Siege". I assume you, too, will endeavor to set the record straight. Perhaps this will be possible during the promotional efforts for your forthcoming book.

To answer the questions you posed the following may be useful:

In the film Dan Mitrione was characterized as a communications expert. In reality he was the Chief Public Safety Officer who managed the administrative affairs of the Public Safety Program in Uruguay. He was an adviser in general police operations and at no time taught torture. His continuing advice to the Uruguayan police was that police brutality was non-productive and he always discouraged any resort to such methods.

At the time Dan Mitrione was being held captive by the terrorists, a tape recording alleged to be of the interrogation sessions was released by the Tupamaros. There is nothing in this recording which tends to substantiate the accusations made against Dan.

The Office of Public Safety does provide training assistance in the United States and in certain host countries where we have a project agreement. Efforts are designed to train instructors so they may train others in their

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organization. This concept of "multiplier effect" is normal for all AID technical assistance endeavors.

Where appropriate and needed, the Office of Public Safety does provide equipment, sometimes including modest amounts of basic police arms to foreign law enforcement agencies that we are aiding.

Our Public Safety Advisers have as their only purpose that of assisting police organizations in modernizing and improving their capabilities. We most definitely have never directly or indirectly encouraged or trained in brutality, severe interrogation methods or torture. On the contrary, coercion of persons under arrest through torture or other inhumane means is most emphatically not a by-product of U.S. technical assistance and is completely antithetical to doctrine imparted by U.S. Public Safety personnel. The objective of the program in which Dan Mitrione served, and in which he gave his life, was quite openly to assist other countries to develop effective, humane concepts of public safety administration.

You will recall that when he was murdered in August of 1970, the White House spokesman, in behalf of President Nixon, called it a "despicable act which will be condemned by men of decency and honor everywhere." He said that Mr. Mitrione had, "served his government with dedication and distinction." To impugn Mr. Mitrione's reputation, as this film does, is to work a travesty on the ideals by which he lived.

I am enclosing a paper which describes the Public Safety Program in general and you will see from this what Public Safety provides host countries.

We wish you the very best and I look forward to seeing your book when it is published.

Sincerely yours,

John Hugh Crimmins

John Hugh Crimmins
Acting Assistant Secretary
for Inter-American Affairs

Attachment:
Public Safety Paper

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Clearances:
ARA/APU:WPStedman
AID/OPS:CBernal
AID/OPS:LGoin
AID/OPA:CDwyer
ARA-LA/PAF:GDWallace

ARA/APU:KNRogers:mmg:5/11/73

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CLAUDE L. FLY

AGRICULTURAL CONSULTANT

Soil and Water Resource Development

Phone: (303) 482-6789

415 South Howes, Apt. 1107

Fort Collins, Colorado

April 23, 1973

The Honorable William P. Rogers
Secretary of State
Department of State
Washington, D. C. 20520

CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Secretary Rogers:-

Some comments on the movie, STATE OF SIEGE, by Costa-Gavras and Producer D. S. Rugoff, have been noted in Newsweek commentary by Edward Behr, in the weekly Human Events of 4/7/73, in AP Washington release about April 15, and in a Wall Street Journal article, 4/20/73, by J. G. Boyum.

I wish to commend you and your staff for denouncing this film. Whether or not the film directly infers the story of Dan Mitrione's kidnapping and murder, the press is obviously giving the public that impression. With all this publicity, the film is likely to become a best-seller...what a cross to hang around the neck of Henrietta Mitrione and the nine children who have already suffered so much.

Mr. Rogers, because of this callous indifference and cruelty to a fine family and inaccurate references to my own situation (Dan was killed three days after I was kidnapped), I feel impelled to speak out against this film even though I have not seen it.

Before doing so, however, I should appreciate some help from you or your staff in resolving answers to the following questions:

1. Did Mitrione teach the Montevideo Police torture methods, the use of drugs in interrogation, or any other methods of violence ?
2. Did Mitrione, as far as Intelligence knows, submit to a tape-recorded interview by the Tupamaros ?
3. Does the USAID Public Safety Office provide Police training and weaponry as a general rule to countries receiving assistance ?

The reviews by the Human Events weekly and by Boyum in the Wall Street Journal lead me to believe that this is a cleverly written and played film clearly designed to further widen the credence gap between American citizens and their Government. Not having seen the film, I may be wrong but it smacks of the Marxist propaganda to which I was subjected during my 208 days in the hands of the Tupamaros.

My book NO HOPE BUT GOD, Hawthorn Book Publishers, will come out in May and will give my personal experiences during that 208-day ordeal. In the meantime, with your help, if some additional light could be thrown on this movie, its producers and intent, and some help given the Mitrione family, I will not wait the release of my book.

Sincerely,

Claude L. Fly

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